

CHRISTOPHER C. RICHARDS.

MARCH 7, 1904.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. McCUMBER, from the Committee on Pensions, submitted the following

REPORT.

[To accompany H. R. 5700.]

The Committee on Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 5700) granting an increase of pension to Christopher C. Richards, have examined the same and report:

The report of the Committee on Invalid Pensions of the House of Representatives, hereto appended, is adopted and the passage of the bill is recommended.

The House report is as follows:

The War Department records show that Christopher C. Richards, the soldier named in this bill and now 85 years of age, served as a private in Company B, Seventy-third Illinois Infantry, from August 5, 1862, to March 22, 1865, when honorably discharged, and the files of the Pension Bureau show that he is now pensioned under the general law at \$17 per month on account of hemorrhoids and rheumatism and resulting disease of heart.

A claim for increase of pension was rejected in April, 1901, upon the ground that the disability from the accepted service causes did not warrant a higher rating and that his present condition was in part due to other than the pensioned causes.

When last examined, on March 28, 1901, the board of surgeons stated that he was so disabled from paralysis agitans of the hands and paresis of the lower limbs as to require the frequent and periodical aid and attendance of another person, and described his condition as follows:

"There is muscular tremor in both hands, quite severe, with muscular weakness of hands and fingers, so that he can not dress himself, although he can feed himself, but this even with considerable difficulty. Complaints of numbness of both lower extremities, and there is marked anæsthesia below both knees, so that a pin can be thrust through the skin without pain, and the great toes of both feet drop down. There is impaired coordination in walking. On rising from a chair he is as likely to go backward as forward, and frequently falls. Ankle clonus and knee reflexes are absent. Sense of constriction around abdomen. Can not stand or walk with eyes closed (slight spinal sclerosis). This claimant can not dress nor attend to the calls of nature without help."

Papers on file in the Pension Bureau show that the beneficiary has no means of support outside of his pension.

In view of the claimant's advanced age (85 years), his services of three years, and his helpless and destitute condition, the relief sought for in the bill is justified; hence the same is reported back with the recommendation that it pass.